

Introduction

THE ETHICS OF KNOWLEDGE CREATION

TRANSACTIONS, RELATIONS AND PERSONS

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Introduction

This volume is concerned with tackling questions of increasing complexity in today's society, as it deals with the foundations, the ethics, and the deployment of knowledge, all so crucial to human lives. In a sense, all human endeavour and striving involves ethical concerns. These concerns have always been implicitly, and in the last decade more explicitly, addressed in anthropological research. By focusing on the ethics of knowledge creation, relations of knowledge and knowledge deployment, the current volume employs and develops novel conceptions that contribute to the understanding of ethical concerns. As part of this process, the volume aims to demonstrate how studies of relations and transactions of knowledge can stimulate an ethical concern that may encourage respect for human individuality, diversity and reciprocity. Moreover, in emphasizing the relations and commitments through which people create knowledge, the volume also contributes to philosophical debates about common humanity. Thus the various chapters all offer insights into how the relations and transaction of knowledge unavoidably deal with ethics: the ways we live together and treat and see each other. From this perspective, we propose to explore knowledge as an extension and a product of human persons and relations, making this volume as much about the creation of knowledge as about ethics.

Our concern with human affinity, as it essentially includes difference, is reflected in how we explore the ethics of knowledge creation as always being embedded in a complex web of relations between people distinctly positioned within social and material structures, cultural values and meanings. How these relations affect and interact in the creation, communication, management and deployment of knowledge is necessarily always an ethical issue. These relations also continuously affect the recognition and decision of what is 'valuable knowledge' in a given context of interaction at different levels, scales and places at different times, and how 'value' may be affected by 'legitimacy'.

The call for respect and tolerance for human difference and individual direction for one's own life-course (as knowledge may offer substantial gains but also considerable losses) recognizes how transnational, global and nation state networks and institutions, guide, control and govern how and what kind of knowledge is valued, created, distributed and managed (see Rabinow 2003; Strathern 2005). As international and national state-regulated conventions, laws and agreements increasingly tend to reach into, define and shape people's and individuals' day-to-day lives, the issues of the kind and content of knowledge, how it is created, transacted and imparted, or kept back, is of crucial ethical concern and vital for people's and individuals' power to voice concerns of their own that affect important areas of their lives, such as material and social security, reproduction, identity, health and well-being.

Individually and in concert the chapters draw attention to a growing tendency for a more uniform and universalizing transnational regulation of knowledge creation and ethical approaches. Concurrently, an increasing movement between nation states of culturally and sociopolitically diverse people both supports and disputes the ethics and usefulness of such uniformity.¹ The chapters in Part I of the volume show how fieldworkers are governed in part by personal and cultural morality and institutional ethics, which they may challenge and attempt to transgress through their subjectivity and imagination (Grønseth, Bacchiddu and Kohn). This approach demonstrates how knowledge sometimes needs to be created in an open and unforeseen space between the negotiating parties (fieldworker and informants), which cannot be encapsulated by standardized regulations and guidelines.

Part II reaches beyond the self and other relations as they are discussed in Part I, focusing on how 'indirect' fieldwork or the fieldworker as a third party deals with data not only from within, but also (and

even more so) beyond the interpersonal encounters. The two chapters here show that there is no easy way in which the fieldworkers can transfer or deploy knowledge from the field as conveyed by their informants or received by the audiences (Huttunen and Bradley). Part III, on the other hand, moves beyond both one-to-one and mediated relations, and places published reports, texts and statements and their interaction with a public audience population as a new set of relations to be analysed by the investigator. While demonstrating how an imagined community is guided by the state and commercial agents, the chapters in this section further discuss the ethics of knowledge itself, as they in different ways ponder the responsibilities and consequences that follow from acquiring the knowledge or cultivating the kinds of selves required for knowledge (Finkler, Melhuus and Josephides).

Following the flow from investigating one-to-one relations, mediated fieldwork, and public documentation and population, the volume demonstrates the need to recognize knowledge as inseparable from the persons involved in the creation and employment of it. Thus, globalization and the movement of people do not point in a uniform direction, but they underscore the humanity of knowledge, as it contains similarity and difference and universality and particularity all at the same time (Appadurai 1996, 2001; Beck 1992; Eriksen 2013).

In what follows we first discuss how we see ethical knowledge as appearing in lacunae between what we frame as 'state practices' and 'social practices', since we argue that it is attached to relations and persons. Following this view, and secondly, we tease out two kinds of management of knowledge; one of 'regard' and one of 'disregard'. Here we argue that an emphasis on the ethics of knowledge creation can resist the claim that the human condition bears the traits of 'bare life', and instead offer a juncture that can point towards freedom, equality and well-being. In the third section we discuss the creation of knowledge as an ethical practice in which one is willing to stretch one's capacities towards a practice where means and ends are the same. We then transgress somewhat against the usual moral stance of anthropology and ask what it means for ethics to be seen as an attribute of persons. Fourth, we examine the process of knowledge creation and discuss how the chapters display relations and transactions of knowledge that together offer a view of ethics as relations and practice. Fifth, we argue that the process of knowledge creation can transgress against the practice of fieldwork and writing anthropological texts as we underscore the ethnographer's continual engagement with the field, and stress how researchers engage in knowledge creation, seen as a process in understanding self and Other in a shared social human

world. In conclusion, we highlight how the anthropological knowledge created is never fully complete or neutral, as it is always part of relations and persons with responsibilities and commitments.

In a Lacuna: Knowledge as Attached to Relations and Persons

By focusing on the ethics of knowledge creation, we suggest in this volume that tensions between human similarities and differences appear in what we identify as 'state practices' and 'social practices' of knowledge creation. State practices are seen as the need to oversee ethical knowledge creation by governmental laws, regulations and programmes that define and direct what kind of knowledge is pursued, how it is pursued and by whom, who has access to it and is able to impart it, and from whom it is withheld. Social practices are seen as ethical knowledge created in transactions and engagements with communities and face-to-face relations, regulated and directed by human capacities for empathy, imagination, affinity and solidarity. In linking state and social practices of ethical knowledge creation, we find lacunae that we suggest result from state practices being insufficiently based in ethical relations in the community and a face-to-face level of social practices. In these lacunae we can detect the lack of appreciation of how knowledge is always (both in commission and omission) attached to individual persons and populations dealing with issues of life-course concern, such as their senses of agency, self, identity, belonging and well-being (see Grønseth 2013).

Within a variety of research disciplines and professional services, knowledge is created that is not always imparted to the actual persons who were involved in the relations and transactions that created the knowledge, or who might be seriously affected by the knowledge. Thus, the knowledge created remains as what we call a hidden 'substantial or technical knowledge' to be used in accordance with and as instructed by politically defined purposes, and not as 'social knowledge' open and available for everyone's use. This, we suggest, is a concern at all levels of knowledge creation: knowledge created within one-to-one relations and/or indirect and mediated fieldwork and professional practices, and, most prevalent, in policy documents and reports.

Recognizing how knowledge is often withheld from open access and use, it appears that when engaging in processes of creating substantial/technical knowledge we learn foremost about how to gain

knowledge – as a kind of discipline – and not about the knowledge itself. Thus the process, we suggest, becomes knowledge about how to gain knowledge. But why do we create knowledge that is not used by or released to the larger public or the actual persons who are affected by the knowledge? What is the use of learning to know how to know, when the knowledge itself is not available and imparted? Such questions are problematic, as we acknowledge that some knowledge may be the by-product of other knowledge, or its very value may depend on its limited dissemination. Furthermore, the potentiality of knowledge to inspire certain kinds of action may make it dangerous in some people's hands, or it may simply open the way for action that goes against conventional or accepted morals. Considering such views, we underscore how we see the process of knowledge production to become ethical or unethical at the moment knowledge is withdrawn or upheld by people or institutions.

Locating itself within this burgeoning field, the current volume focuses on how knowledge is entangled in relations and engagements between people, including researchers and informants, and emphasizes how such relations and obligations are part of philosophical discussions about a common humanity (see Gaita 1998; Josephides 2008). While not addressing directly the question of how to live an ethical life, or asking about the place of the ethical in human life (Lambek 2010) or how to construct oneself through ethical practices (Rabinow 2003), the volume implicitly engages these debates from a different standpoint. This is a standpoint from which we see knowledge to be an attribute of persons, as Strathern highlights in the Afterword. Included in our approach is an acknowledgement of how knowledge is created, managed and used for specific purposes, though not necessarily always leading to the intended and desired results.

Face-to-Face Transactions, Mediating the Field, Humanity beyond the Local

Given our concern with the ethics of knowledge creation, we emphasize how ethics is part of the human condition. As humans we are always subject to ethics as displayed in the consequences of actions, evaluations, acknowledgements, caring, success and failures, both our own and those of others. Tacit, implicit ethics are concerned here, not related to any single religion or philosophical metaphysics but, as Lambek (2010) points out, the 'ordinary ethics' of everyday life. In turn, the ethics of ordinary life are closely linked to, and often coarsened, in the broader social forces such as professional conduct,

human rights, refuge and citizenship, justice, reproduction and biotechnology. As our volume joins what appears to be an 'ethical turn' in theorizing and documenting ethics as central in human life, we push anthropology forward to recognize the ethics of knowledge creation, as it is central for the conditions in which human life is conducted, experienced and lived.²

In our focus on ethics as a human dimension, rather than a distinct cognitive, social or cultural compartment of creating knowledge, we seek to contribute to and influence anthropological theory. This does not imply ignorance of how ethics in knowledge creation is also always part of history, as in the practices of priests and clerics, the philosophical or professional objectification of ethics, or ethical articulations in modern law and expertise management, as in bioethics. Rather than differentiate a distinct domain or practice of ethics of knowledge creation, we seek to deepen our understanding of the vast range of steps and aspects that interact when examining the ethics of knowledge creation. Holding that the ethics of knowledge creation is relevant in various domains subject to technological, political and social reflections and interventions, we recognize that it is also articulated in globalized situations or 'global assemblages' (Ong and Collier 2005), which define new material in the form of collective and discursive relationships that reconstitute not only the classical concepts of society, culture and such, but also the reflections and regime of ethical concerns in anthropological and social research (Strathern 2003, 2005, 2006; Kenway and Fahey 2009).

Managing Knowledge: 'Ethics of Regard' and 'Ethics of Disregard'

Considering the vast layers of transacting participants, audiences, employers, interests and regulations that are at stake and interact in the creation of knowledge, we suggest that ethical knowledge creation is part of two different kinds of ethics: 'ethics of regard' and 'ethics of disregard'. An ethic of regard, we propose, is based on engagement in face-to-face relations of respect and equality in which knowledge is transacted and becomes the source for knowledge creation. We hasten to note that not all face-to-face relations are based on respect and equality, but may instead lead to discrimination and suppression. However, when knowledge is created without recognizing its source, or without entering ethically grounded relations of regard, it becomes

necessary to make laws and regulations that advise on how to impart and deploy the knowledge. In this perspective, knowledge created outside an ethic of engaged face-to-face relations (which may or may not be based on respect) can be seen as created within an ethic of disregard that relies on controlling the knowledge by institutional or state regulations. Moreover, when applying regulations there is a need to employ judgement, which is not always factual, honest, or truthful to lived life. Thus we suggest that state practice, as it is seen to be founded on an ethic of disregard, might turn out to serve interests that groups and individuals feel do not respond to concerns of their everyday lives with their critical moments of misfortune, rupture or serious illness. However, we ask if judgement is not also in use in the ethics of regard. How to judge whether attachments are good or bad is complex (see Latour 2004).

Considering how ethics is meant to guide how we treat each other in face-to-face relations as well as in the politics of constituting the social structures we live within, we suggest that the distinction between an ethic of regard and an ethic of disregard is a fruitful one in responding to Agamben's concept of 'bare life' (1998). We understand bare life to be a human condition, which lies, as Ziarek (2008) points out, between the biological *zoe* and the political *bios* (Arendt 1998 [1958]), or between 'mere life' and 'good life' (Aristotle 1998, book I, chapter 2:10). Mere life, Agamben says, 'is not simply natural reproductive life, the *zoe* of Greeks, nor *bios*' but rather 'a zone of indistinction and continuous transition between man and beast' (1998: 109). Underlining the flexibility of the position of being in between, we suggest the ethics of regard and disregard afford an entry at various junctures along the continuum and serve as an avenue for an eventuality of freedom and equality.

Bare life is not *zoe*, it is life wounded, expendable, endangered, calling to mind Adorno's reference to the effects of sovereign violence, stripped of political significance and any specific form of life (Ziarek 2008: 90). Bare life is double, as it is excluded from the *polis*, while simultaneously it is included by way of exclusion and exposed to unlimited violation. Recognizing this hidden incorporation of bare life within *polis*, the human condition of modern democracies is, according to Agamben, characterized by being subject to sovereign power while at the same time claiming individual human rights and liberties. While not engaging further with the implications that follow, we declare for a need to resist the imposition of a human condition bearing the traits of bare life, and offer the ethics of knowledge creation as a fruitful alternative.

However, when we as scholars in qualitative research settings set up and engage in face-to-face relations that make knowledge apparent, or make new knowledge, how are these creations different from the state-regulated creation of knowledge? Cannot also a social practice of knowledge creation founded in ethics of regard serve interests that are not in tune with the informants' everyday life concerns? These quandaries are most apparent in Part I of the book in which an ethic of regard in terms of face-to-face interviews and participant observations make the starting point for acquiring knowledge. The chapters recognize a reflection on the social position and situatedness of the interviewer, which can affect motivations and serve as incentive for research interpretations and knowledge creation. They also reflect on the relation with the informants and on the informant herself or himself being an investigator on her or his own terms; a reflection of the informants as equal, fully social and moral persons. Thus, the chapters of Part I make an attempt to understand the lives of others as persons that are explorers in their own lives; a perspective we suggest offers the informant a chance to resist oppression and the structures of bare life.

In being loyal to Papushpa's exploration of her life within the strict control of her father and family, Grønseth reflects on how it challenged her own moral stand, thus offering a space for negotiating Papushpa's life concerns. Experiencing a different but similar control, Bacchiddu learnt about the Apiao and the adoptees only when her investigation became a practice of 'doing difference', while she entered the field attuned to equality and sameness. With reference to four different field sites, Kohn came to recognize that each field site required a distinct approach, as she realized that her ethically based preparations for the field needed adjustments. Kohn's chapter can be seen to sum up the three chapters when she argues that the ethics of fieldwork lie in the actual practice itself; a practice of relations between differently situated investigating persons (researcher and informants). Acknowledging the complexities in plural motivations, interests and powers lying within and between the informant and researcher, we argue for a need to stimulate a research practice – an ethic of regard – attuned to the concerns of the everyday life of the Other, and as such stimulate opposition against degradation, oppression and sovereign powers.

Considering the institutional and state-regulated knowledge creation within an ethic of disregard, the determination of ethics leads to regulations in which the state or institution declares that it is acting in the best interests of the society or institution. Even so, it remains

to be seen how and when it accords with particular groups' and individuals' interests. This issue is discussed in particular in Part III. First, Finkler shows how the personalized genetic testing in the United States is linked to developments in the medical field and the cultural values of individual autonomy and self-knowledge, but 'passes over' how the same knowledge interferes in and affects people's lives in ways they are not consciously aware of, thus 'stripping' them in terms of political life. In a similar vein Melhuus teases out the ethical complexities of how Norwegian cultural values are made into mandates for ethical correctness, while she discusses how such ethics serve or do not serve the interests of individual lives.

The chapters in Part II deal with issues 'in between', or rather the overlaps of the ethics of regard and disregard, as the researcher herself is highlighted as a kind of third party. Huttunen describes the complicated layers of individual, professional and global relations she is brought into when she is asked to act as an intermediary on behalf of a Bosnian refugee in psychotherapy, and ponders the issue of how to handle such complex and intermingled interests. Bradley's chapter similarly offers a reflection on the unease of making use of local field-workers within the dictates of a larger research programme, running the risk of endangering living life.

In this complex interrelation between ethics of knowledge creation within engaged face-to-face relations, and state regulations carried out with reference to judgement, we see a question of the viability of the knowledge created. The question relates to the issue of the 'soundness of the foetus', so to speak. In assessing viability, we see a need to ask: What are the practical implications of the knowledge created, and for whom? How does the new knowledge make everyone more capable of dealing with their life concerns? What possibilities does the new knowledge add to everyone's life-course and well-being?

As the distinct chapters and the volume as a whole demonstrate, such questions are not easily answered, and we offer no check list to tick off and be satisfied that 'ethics has been taken care of'. Rather, we underline that it is in the query itself that the issue of ethics appears, as it is in the process of transacting, managing and creating knowledge that ethics – of regard and disregard – becomes as animated and complex as life itself. As the volume displays a variety of fields of relations, we become aware, as Strathern observes in the Afterword, how we tend to see knowledge as a kind of information and data attained or kept by others. Recognizing a need to reach beyond knowledge as such a Europe-American kind of objectified object we call for not only contextualization in terms of history, culture and politics, but

an awareness of the person, as we realize that ‘Knowing and knower may be more or less distinctive or convergent, but exist for each other’ (Strathern in Afterword). Thus, the ethics of knowledge creation is flexible and contextual, not to be defined or placed once and for all but following the flow of relations between persons within distinct cultural and social systems and structures and resisting the production of bare life.

Creation of Knowledge as Ethical Practice

Stretching One’s Capacities

This volume takes a position in which we see ethics as telling us about knowledge as it is negotiated, managed, distributed and challenged by judgements, ideologies and genealogies in shifting social and cultural contexts. Our contemporary world is characterized by an increasing degree of formalized ethical considerations, boards, standards and guidelines, shaping not only global and local trade, business, and political agendas and activities, but also social and anthropological research. In addition, there are strong political demands on research to contribute with concrete social impact and interventions. Together, these are forces that set frames for the kind of knowledge researchers create and the lives we live both globally and locally.

When referring to the terms ‘ethical’ or ‘ethics’ these are not easily disentangled from ‘moral’ or ‘moralities’. Rather than deciding for a priori assumptions about what is moral in terms of conventional norms or principle values considered as ‘good’, ‘right’ or ‘generous’, social scientists commonly explore how what is said and done by people in everyday life is made sense of a posteriori (Das 2010; Fassin 2012), thus an inductive approach. Traditionally, philosophers tend to confirm morality as culturally bound values, while ethics is seen as an overarching and philosophical theme. However, more recent anthropologists are inclined to use the terms interchangeably (Fassin 2012: 6). Among anthropologists, there is no common trend. While some anthropologists establish a difference, others do not attach any importance to such a possible difference.

However, which stand one takes reflects different understandings of subjectivities and subjectivation as social processes. During the last decades of the twentieth century, anthropologists have focused on subjectivities as traditional, based on the assumption that moral norms and values govern collective and individual behaviour (Edel

1962; Pocock 1986). More recently, anthropologists have called for a focus on how ethical practices result from social agency (Fassin 2012). As Didier Fassin notes (2012: 6), this implies on the one hand an understanding of moral norms as dominating and not leaving initiative to individuals (Laidlaw 2002), and on the other hand an ethical subjectivation engaged by social agents through technologies of the self (Faubion 2011). Even though the two views share the same call for an ethical stance (rather than moral), they differ in that the one sees individuals as free ethical agents, and the other sees a genealogy of ethics. Thus, depending on the view taken, morals and ethics, or morality and ethic, can be regarded as indistinctive or distinctive.

Our volume does not primarily engage with morals or ethics 'of the Other' as being the interlocutors in the research process. Rather, it grapples with ethics in the relations of knowledge creation. However, it still engages a critical debate of ethics. It does so as the chapters across the three parts underline a need for not taking for granted our common sense of 'good' and 'bad', 'right' and 'wrong'. Together the chapters highlight how ethics are usually not given a priori but rather interpreted a posteriori by the interlocutors and the anthropologist. In particular, Josephides engages the relationship between knowledge and ethics in four figures of knowers, as she examines the cultivation of the kind of selves required for knowledge in a historical, philosophical and anthropological enquiry. As a whole, the volume addresses the debate of anthropologists as subjects engaged in moral commitment and ethical positions, although not always consciously. Furthermore, the chapters scrutinize the ethical justifications, reasoning and consequences of knowledge as containing descriptions, interpretations and actions in our contemporary world. Thus, we hold that by exploring the relations and creation of knowledge, we always deal with ethical concerns of how we treat each other.

The ethics of knowledge creation are also importantly present in academic exchanges. A recent volume (Josephides 2015a), whose impetus was to recognize the inspirational work of Marilyn Strathern in anthropology and beyond, explored knowledge exchange and the different ways in which knowledge is produced through chapters that developed insights by re-contextualizing aspects of Strathern's work from several perspectives: vis-à-vis the studied people in the field, in relation to knowledge production and academia and in relationships with fellow anthropologists. These investigations brought into focus the requirements and obligations of knowledge in a general way, at the same time as they advanced these themes into new territories. Such theorizations of ethnographic writing, as a form of knowledge

grounded in relationships, is well-documented in anthropology. Strathern herself participated in a concluding dialogue that evaluated the research directions inspired by her scholarship, thus taking forward a joint project to a synthesis that suggested new paths and new questions for research (Josephides 2015b).

How we treat each other lies at the very heart of our well-being and everyday life, individually as well as collectively, and speaks directly to the anthropological quest for knowledge about the lives of humans; the human condition. Exploring knowledge creation within the frames of the mundane everyday life reveals ethics that are relatively tacit, as this creation takes place within social relations and practices, which are also inherently emotional and imaginative. When ethical questions become explicit it is generally as a result of ruptures, disputes or renewals (Lambek 2010). In the creation of knowledge, as in research, there are many explicit and formal ethical rules and standards that regulate the researcher's conduct and approach towards her or his field of interest and the relation to the interlocutors or informants. However, during the enquiry and ethnographic fieldwork many ethical concerns may transgress, challenge and dispute such standardized guidelines, while not always offering a certain answer. This is related to how we understand what is 'ethical' in a broad sense, referring to a field of action or practical judgement, rather than to what is good or right (Lambek 2010: 9). Furthermore, we understand 'ethics' in line with Michael Lambek's (2010) comment that it recognizes a complexity and inconsistency in human action and intention, which mostly appears in philosophy and some linguistic or phenomenological oriented ethnography. This approach to ethics is far from moral codes and instructions; rather, it suggests that we have limited self-understanding (Lambek 2010; Nehamas 1998: 67).

Seeing knowledge creation as a kind of practice, it is ethical (as are other practices) as long as the goal is not instrumental but reaching for the best within its practice – and for human good or well-being. The ethical practice implies the willingness to stretch one's capacities, in a sense in which means and ends are one and the same. This is in line with how Hannah Arendt employs 'actuality' as activity that does not pursue an external end, but utilizes the full meaning in the performance itself (1998 [1958]: 206). In a sense, this is the practice of living life for life itself. Thus, ethical knowledge creation is not governed by reaching an instrumental goal, but creating knowledge for the human good. Taking this stand, we recognize that the ethics of knowledge creation are not possible to decide beforehand, as it takes place in the actuality; in the practice of the here and now, as it entails

a complex web of power- and social relations, emotions, sensations and imaginations.

The Anthropologist's Ethical Stance

As Wiktor Stoczkowski (2008) points out, anthropology has traditionally sought to ensure social progress (in the West) by means of knowledge. This, Stoczkowski observes, appears for instance in how Edward Burnett Tylor saw studies of our savage past as helping to purify and set new moral codes that would enable social reforms (see Tylor 1871: II, 410). Furthermore, it emerges in how Durkheim (1994 [1912]) believed studies of primitive people contribute to a renovation of our Western culture, and how Lévi-Strauss (2003 [1971]) understood ethnology as transmitting a wisdom to the West that would contribute to a new moral order reconciling us with nature (see Stoczkowski 2008: 347). Together, such understandings imply that the creation of knowledge and social reform were seen as harmonious tasks. This interwoven ambition was present in the 'colonial anthropology' of the 1920s, in the 'applied anthropology' of the 1940s and 1950, and later in the 'critical anthropology' from the 1970s and onwards in terms of reflectively taking on blame and responsibility for Western traditions of imperialism, colonialism, capitalism, racism, nationalism and more, again moving towards a moral purification of the West (Stoczkowski 2008: 348).

In a similar vein, some anthropologists call for moral commitment by empathizing and defending the rights of the oppressed (see for instance Scheper-Hughes 1995), whereas others term such a call as 'moral anxiety' (Faubion 2003). Common to all these approaches is a belief that the fundamentals for knowledge creation match the fundamentals of ethics.

However, this volume focuses on knowledge as an attribute of the (knowing) person, rather than going further into the discussions of knowledge as a means for doing good. In line with this, we propose that knowledge creation takes place in the linkage between not only the local and the non-local, but also (and more fundamentally) in the process of the knowledge seeker becoming a knower (see Josephides this volume; Daston and Galison 2010). Our stress on the linkage between knowledge and person relates to an ethical view of virtue or care for self and humanity.

This approach is in line with the Foucauldian and Aristotelian view in which an action is assessed by the virtuous disposition that underlies the agent's psychology (Fassin 2012: 7) or, as 'the manner

in which one ought to form oneself as an ethical subject acting in reference to the prescriptive elements that make up the code' (Foucault 1990 [1984]: 25–26). In accordance with such a view, this volume proposes to understand ethics as a process of inner states encouraged by virtue and care, while also encouraging action. This view has the additional merit of allowing differentiated ethnographic approaches that look for general moral codes, or ethical debates understood through particular situations and contexts.

This understanding differs from the deontological ethics deriving from Durkheim and Kant in which 'morality is duty plus desire' (Fassin 2012: 7), meaning we are both obliged and inclined to do good. As Fassin (2012) points out, it is a view in which an action is judged by respect to the rules or principles that govern the agents, imposed upon them as a *superego*. Our understanding also differs from the ethics of consequence, which assess actions and conducts by their consequences more than their conformity with existing rules (deontological) or as a result of a particular disposition of the agent (virtue and care). However, in the lived everyday life that anthropologists study, the three moral paradigms are often inextricably entangled. The blurring between political and moral arguments also appears in our volume, such as in Melhuus' discussion of reproductive technologies, Finkler's genetic make-up, and less overtly in other chapters.

The Process of Knowledge Creation: Relations, Morals and Ethics

Ethics is part of the human condition, as we are predisposed to feel, experience, reason, judge and create knowledge within a moral sensibility. Moralities of the general human striving and endeavours on the one hand, and the obligations or duties and sense of 'ought' on the other hand, may be seen as a useful distinction (Edel and Edel 1959) though it may become both too narrow and too wide. However, the distinction is useful in identifying vital and dynamic interrelationships between values deriving from cosmologies and metaphysics on the one hand, and the behaviours and practices of everyday life on the other. This dynamic can be seen as the centrepiece of Howell's collection *The Ethnography of Moralities* (1997), which further addressed problems of 'doing fieldwork' and 'writing anthropology' as the twin anthropological methodologies (see also Carrithers 2005). Sharing an interest in ethnographic methodology, our exploration of the ethics of face-to-face fieldwork relations stresses the need to recognize, beyond

the verbal and factual, also the tacit, intuitive, intimate, imaginative, emotional and empathic aspects as crucial to the creation of knowledge (see also Grønseth and Davis 2010; Josephides 2008).

Such relational, intersubjective, personal and imaginative capacities involved in the creation of knowledge appear in particular in the chapters of Part I. Reaching out to the Tamil/Norwegian socially isolated teenager Papushpa, Grønseth recognizes how knowledge fundamentally is generated in relations and the imagination. From this perspective, the chapter focuses on how embodiment, engagement and empathic relations attend to the human experience. Thus, Grønseth comes to realize how the subject always holds both a personal and social history, which cannot be fully grasped by symbols or language.

Advancing a field of dangerous knowledge, or the protection of knowledge, Bacchiddu similarly enters the borderlands between self and Other. Taking an approach of silence, Bacchiddu learns by 'doing' among the Apiao people, and attends to the life stories of her informants, the adoptees. From such engaged interpersonal relations, Bacchiddu realizes how she is in a similar position as her informants in terms of seeking 'sameness', while managing a compulsory difference.

Kohn's chapter links to Grønseth's and Bacchiddu's chapters, as she discusses the need to appreciate the researcher's sensitivity and response to the field. Drawing on three distinct fieldwork settings, Kohn argues for the need to reflect on their differences and relations. She becomes aware how each small change in context and relation invokes new questions, methods, transactions and creations of knowledge, which can be overlooked or obstructed by the requirements of institutional ethics review bodies.

Emphasizing ethnographic and anthropological explorations, the volume as a whole is concerned with how knowledge can no longer be restricted to face-to-face relations but must include the effects of technology, global consumption patterns and changing geopolitical configurations (Moore 1996). However, our focus is on the acknowledgement that human beings can access a particularly intense form of intersubjective understanding, and have a rich potential for social forms that are created by the capacity to influence, convince, teach or coax each other, always leading to results that are not given or known in advance (Carrithers 1992, 2009).

Following such an approach, Part II elaborates the unforeseen and unexpected consequences and quandaries of knowledge production. Here, the focus is on how indirect or mediated fieldwork deals with

reference not only to interpersonal encounters, but also beyond them. Part II discusses how the fieldworker is captured in the web of her or his relations and social position. In Huttunen's chapter a Bosnian refugee and psychotherapeutic patient invites Huttunen into the therapeutic room and wants his story told to the world as a witness statement to historical events. Reflecting on this encounter, Huttunen discusses how she came to act as a 'hinge' between the confidential stories created in the therapy setting and the social and political stories, and in this move transforms the personal stories into knowledge of collective significance. Similarly, Bradley's chapter discusses how she became the central axis for creating knowledge in a large-scale, multisited and policy-driven project in four different countries (India, Pakistan, Tanzania and Nigeria). While reflecting on the challenges in teaching ethnographic methods to local fieldworkers, she came to a realization of how ethnographic methods create data from differently situated views. The data furthermore offered complexities and contradictions, which did not easily respond to the research programme. Thus while both Huttunen and Bradley discuss the lack of a predictable or straightforward way in which ethnographers can transfer or deploy knowledge from the field, as conveyed by their informants or received by the audiences, they also point towards a complex task of renegotiating moral worlds.

In the large-scale analysis offered in Finkler's chapter, what is questioned is the significance of personalized genetics for individual humans' relations to self, family, kin and society. The knowledge retrieved by the new genetics, Finkler argues, affects our understanding and dealings with privacy and confidentiality, in particular in the field of medicine, as well as in fields that evoke ethical concerns related to property and ownership. Such ethical dilemmas arise when new knowledge about ourselves, our personhoods or our possible future – especially concerning health and sickness – is gained by personal genetic information. In the small-scale analysis given in her chapter, Grønseth highlights how personal moral challenges raise ethical issues of judgement and responsibility. Confronted with her informant's suffering and quest for well-being by complying to her Tamil family's and her father's social control, and being held captive by her promise not to interfere, Grønseth argues for a need to recognize a space for the empathic and imaginative creation of knowledge, acknowledging that one can never completely know oneself or the Other.

However, this volume reaches beyond the research process as such and grapples with ethics of knowledge creation in social and cultural processes at different times, places and scales. We share

Harris's concern in *Ways to Knowledge* (2007) when attending to how knowledge links to practices, skills, experiences, tacit knowledge and meaning, though our interest additionally addresses the significance of the research set-up when engaging in the relations and transactions of knowledge creation. These issues make up the core of Huttunen's and Bradley's chapters. Huttunen discusses how the therapeutic relationship can be a space or 'global form' (Ong and Collier 2005) similar to the truth commissions, in which anthropological enquiry can take place, while she points to the continuous need for contextualization and audience. Bradley examines the difficulties in using untrained local research assistants, in particular when asking them to record informal conversations with people from their own community, in which many were personally well known. While reflecting on ethical concerns in transacting and presenting the view of 'the Other', the chapter also considers how, among some local research assistants, there emerged an increased self-awareness of their own knowledge guiding their everyday life and world view. This is in line with how we seek to discuss the ethics and relations of knowledge creation, as it highlights an appreciation of an equal and conjoined humanity, while also recognizing human ambivalence and sometimes failure in identifying with an exclusive collective, which is freely or forcefully chosen (see also Herzfeld 1995).

From Fieldwork to Ethnographic Writing and Anthropology

In his book on 'Making', Tim Ingold (2013: 4, 5) talks about anthropology and ethnography as antithetical ways of knowing, with the first being 'a transformational space for generous, open-ended comparative and critical enquiry into the conditions and potentials of human life' and the second turning participant observation into qualitative data 'to be analysed in terms of an exogenous body of theory'. While we would argue that ethnography helped create that body of theory, we are drawn to his formulation that knowing is 'understanding in practice', enmeshed with 'making' as an active engagement with the material world (2013: 5). Participant observation, Ingold argues, is a way of knowing 'from the inside', 'because we are already *of* the world' (2013: 5; see also Faubion and Marcus 2009). When we extract 'data' from this existential mode of knowing and present them as knowledge reconstructed from the outside, we set up participant observation as a paradox when it is simply part of dwelling in the world. Arguing

otherwise removes us from the world in which we dwell and 'leaves us strangers to ourselves' (Ingold 2013: 5). Understanding fieldwork and ethnography as part of world-dwelling liberates us from 'descriptive fidelity' and opens up 'transformational engagements' with people beyond the settings of fieldwork. This openness acknowledges that the theorist 'makes through thinking' and thus that fieldwork is just part of that process (Ingold 2013: 6).³

In the process of the creation of knowledge, then, we recognize how the relations and interface between self and Other are the moment and place in which the researcher transforms field-site experiences into ethnographic writing (Halstead, Hirsch and Okely 2008; Strathern 1991). Other processes of knowledge creation also take place between self and Other, although at different levels. Halstead, Hirsch and Okely (2008) point out how the ethnographer's reflections and scrutiny in the research process are agents that facilitate a certain kind of 'crisis' or transformative process. Grønseth and Davis (2010) argue that the ethnographer's own embodied experiences in the field can attune the ethnographer to an empathic and tacit mode of knowledge that speaks of imparted experiences of everyday life close to how it is felt and lived by the Other.

Acknowledging such a transformative process captures the writing of the 'ethnographic present' in constant change rather than as fixed and unchanging. Thus the discussion of the ethnographic present is addressed here less as writing against or disturbing culture (Abu-Lughod 1991; Gupta and Ferguson 1992; Brightman 1995; Kuper 1999) and more as escaping ordinary historical categories while being informed by the anthropologist's continual involvement with the field. This view is in line with the volume's appreciation of the researchers' continual engagement as part of the anthropological practice of fieldwork and writing, although we underscore the need for an explicit discussion of ethical involvement that recognizes a responsible and solitary engagement when entering relations, setting up research design, transacting knowledge, and managing the knowledge created.

Representation: Knowledge for Whom or for What?

As can be seen from the discussion in the previous section, ethics of knowledge creation is closely linked to representation. For whom is the knowledge created and to what end? Issues of representation, audience and purpose are part of this volume's concern and are discussed from different approaches, particularly in Part III of the book. In 'Robust Knowledge' Marilyn Strathern (2005) discusses two modes

of knowledge production, one in which ‘traditional’ science is seen as ‘external’ with the task of reconstituting society, and another in which ‘contemporary’ science is ‘internal’, no longer an authoritative project but instead adding uncertainty and instability with control exercised indirectly from the inside (Strathern 2005: 466). Once ‘robust through its own validation procedures’, science now needs society to confer acceptability (Strathern 2005: 476).⁴ But it is institutionalized forms of audit, rather than society or the public, that must confer acceptability.⁵ The new ‘primitive’, in Edwards’ ironic reflection, ‘is the scientifically illiterate’ (Edwards, Harvey and Wade 2007: 9). We need to be literate to understand how science ‘abdicates responsibility for the application of its findings to “society”’ (Edwards, Harvey and Wade 2007: 9).

In Melhuus’s chapter this abdication is not vis-à-vis society but in relation to the individual. Melhuus discusses the effects of managing ‘who is entitled to know’, and whether knowing is necessary when assessing questions of reproductive medicine and sperm donation in the context of the state’s institutionalization of ethics, which according to politicians speak to social core values. Yet as Melhuus demonstrates, there is no consensus among legislators or the public at large about the regulations and legislation, though there is a general agreement about the need for regulation as a precaution against potential social harm. The legislation, Melhuus argues, is not only about managing risk but is also a political strategy for protecting what is deemed to be Norwegian sociocultural values, while also articulating tensions between knowing, not knowing and who is ‘the knower/non-knower’.

In a similar vein, Finkler’s chapter adumbrates the propensity of knowledge of personalized genetics to convince us that we can control risk, and in Beck’s words, ‘colonise the future’ as we make the ‘unforeseeable foreseeable’ (1998: 12). Failure to avoid risk, Finkler argues, easily results in the individual person being blamed for his or her sickness, overlooking how choice and decision are not only individual but are also anchored in culturally constructed notions of probability and statistics that constantly create new realities.

Josephides’s chapter steps all the way back to discuss knowledge creation as a kind of methodology of understanding, in an enquiry into the cultivation of the kind of selves required for knowledge. It identifies three key terms: relations, knowledge and persons, and discusses four figures of knowers in historical context: the pure observer, the thinking man/woman defending the virtues of knowledge, the knower shaped simultaneously by the content and the context of

knowing, and the researcher placed between obligations and requirements, enmeshed in conditions of knowing that are shared by all knowers and at all times. The discussion draws on materials from anthropology, philosophy and philosophy of science, especially the history of objectivity, where three types of epistemic virtue are identified (truth to nature, objectivity and trained judgement), onto which the four figures of knowers can be mapped.

As this volume, and Part III in particular, grapples with the issues of ethics and representation it also raises a vast array of dilemmas that have been thoroughly debated in other publications (Amit 2000; Caplan 2003; Fluehr-Lobban 2002; Pels 1999, 2000; Scheper-Hughes 1995; Strathern 2000). Knowledge is created for a number of different audiences, which for anthropology and social sciences in general include the subjects themselves. However, some researchers find their writing (and thus the knowledge it creates and presents) contested by their subjects (see for instance Caplan 2003), which raises the question of 'who has the right to represent others'.

When considering the wider public as the audience there are intricate questions of how to (re)present and explain knowledge to often sceptical audiences (for instance, in courts of law or political debates), which can include a need to challenge stereotypes and preconceptions. In such cases the researcher's empathy and engagement can often become temporarily secondary and undermined by contexts for the presentation and deployment of knowledge that require an authoritative, objective and factual form (Caplan 2003; Strathern 2005). Furthermore, the ethics of knowledge creation are complicated by the researcher's positioning, as we acknowledge how researchers themselves affect the relations, interpretations and creation of knowledge by their own personal, social and cultural background and position in the field. While we see threads of the anthropological classical debates on morality, rationality and ethics, we engage in and highlight a methodological discussion of the ethics of knowledge creation seen as a process of understanding the self and Other as sharing a social human world.

Concluding Remarks

This volume takes us through some of the complexities of the ethics and relations in the process of knowledge creation. While the volume concentrates on the ethics of knowledge creation, it also demonstrates

how anthropologists create knowledge, which can never be fully neutral or complete. We recognize how ‘an impartial social inquiry is impossible’ (Barnes 1967: 203), as the knowledge we create is always inferred by relations of responsibility and commitment. However, we appreciate the stand that anthropology does not give a rationale for advocacy or speaking for a particular cause, even though it may become a ‘moral imperative’ (see Hastrup and Elsass 1990: 301), as there is no way for the anthropologist to avoid involvement. Since the discipline recognizes that the ethnographers themselves are part of the encounter, they are also part of the material and knowledge created (among many others, see Caplan 2003; Grønseth and Davis 2010). Furthermore, taking it as given that there is no clear-cut distinction between self and Other – in that they only exist for each other – the anthropologist cannot fully speak for the Other. Rather, it is in the interplay between self and Other, between knowing and not knowing, that the ethics appear.

From such a view, we highlight how the volume’s concern with the creation of knowledge as part of relations and transactions furthermore calls for ethics that encourage respect for human individuality, diversity and reciprocity. This call responds to today’s global and troublesome standardization and polarization of similarity and difference, though also to the anthropological community in terms of appreciating and reflecting on the contextual, reciprocal and interpersonal relations that create knowledge.

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the Cosmopolitans: Moral and Existential Conditions of Being Human (2014, co-editor A. Hall) and *Knowledge and Ethics in Anthropology: Obligations and Requirements* (2015).

Notes

1. One way uniformity is achieved is through audit – see Strathern 2005 discussed below.
2. Though here we are concerned with the ‘extraordinary’ ethics of knowledge exchange and do not engage the distinction between anthropological knowledge and local knowledge, the concept of ‘ordinary ethics’ is germane to our enquiry. Jarrett Zigon (2014: 746) has mounted an extensive critique of ‘everyday ethics’. In his phenomenological hermeneutics of ‘embodied morality’ ethics is ‘tacit, grounded in agreement rather than rule, practice rather than knowledge or belief’ (2014: 748). Zigon argues that if we see moralities and ethics not as aspects of primary cultural and social practices (such as politics or religion) but as distinct and significant factors in shaping these, then we are at risk of occupying a ‘transcendental moral position’ (2014: 747) that dissolves ethics into the social (2014: 749); in effect, it gives us the beast with two heads: Aristotelian Kantianism that combines the ordinary with the transcendental (2014: 750).
3. Jarrett Zigon (2014: 754) understands Ingold’s paradigm of ‘dwelling’ as allowing people to become ‘something that previously would not have been possible’. While the building of new ‘subjective worlds’ is an activity that we see happening in many of the chapters, we leave it to the reader to determine whether the vocabulary of dwelling adds understandings beyond definitions of ‘dignity’ and Aristotelian ‘grounding experiences’.
4. Some of these ideas originate in Nowotny et al. (2001), where they identify ‘a shift from attempts to place science more firmly *in* society towards the idea that science should be more accountable to society, and that this is best achieved by bringing *society* into science’ (Edwards, Harvey and Wade 2007: 9). For them, this communicative arena is ‘the public space of the agora where ideas can be debated, negotiated, and science and publics are mutually informed’ (Edwards, Harvey and Wade 2007: 14).
5. Commenting on Strathern’s work, Alberto Corsin Jimenez (2007: 39) argues that today ‘society decides what makes good science’. Specifically, the first ‘management model of knowledge’ thrives on critique, while the second is damaged by it. Thus, ‘making knowledge flow’ requires different management and organizational skills in the two models. The audit, according to Jimenez, ‘is administration gone paranoid rather than public’ (cited in Edwards 2011: 11).

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